

UPDATES ON OSWER S MERCURY ACTIVITIES

Hazardous Waste Combustors: On September 30, 1999, EPA promulgated standards to control emissions of hazardous air pollutants from incinerators, cement kilns, and lightweight aggregate kilns that burn hazardous wastes. A number of parties, representing both industry and the environmental community, sought judicial review of the rule. In response to a court decision to vacate this rule, petitioners filed a joint motion asking the Court to stay the issuance of its mandate to allow EPA time to develop interim standards. These interim standards were promulgated on February 13 & 14, 2002. They replace the vacated standards temporarily, until revised replacement standards are promulgated by June 15, 2005. The Agency also intends to issue emission standards for hazardous waste burning industrial, institutional, commercial boilers, process heaters, and hydrochloric acid production furnaces by this date.

OSW Mercury Web Page: OSW is developing a comprehensive mercury management website that will provide up-to-date, accurate information on mercury waste management resources in a consolidated location. The web page will contain information on OSW s mercury program, and the mercury programs run by states, regions, other federal agencies as well as non-governmental organizations. The website is expected to be launched by June of 2003. The URL for the page will be www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/mercury/index.

Saving Energy through Fluorescent Lamp Recycling: OSW is administrating a two million dollar grant program to facilitate a better lamp recycling infrastructure. Grants are to create lamp recycling outreach programs (targeting commercial and industrial users of mercury-containing lamps) to increase awareness of proper disposal methods. This program is being developed jointly with state environmental agencies, lamp manufacturers and recyclers.

Mercury Automobile Switches: States, EPA regional offices, and NGOs concerned about mercury switches in automobiles and the release of mercury during car recycling are addressing this problem through legislative efforts, pilot projects and outreach campaigns. OSW will hold a roundtable meeting with national representation at the August 2003 RCRA National Meeting to promote discussion among stakeholders.

Mercury Treatability Studies: Published Notice of Data Availability (NODA) on January 29, 2003 (68 FR 4481). This NODA makes available two studies initiated to help evaluate whether EPA could propose treatment and disposal alternatives to the current land disposal restriction treatment standard of mercury retorting. The studies were performed to assess conditions that affect the stability of waste residues resulting from the treatment of high mercury (greater than 260 mg/kg total mercury) wastes. EPA has concluded that changes to our national regulations are impractical at this time. This NODA provides information on how to use existing treatability variance procedures to make site-specific choices on alternatives to mercury recovery.